

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-16), member of the House Armed Services Committee, issued the following statement on House passage of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012:

“The defense authorization bill passed by the House today provides our troops with the resources they need, ensures our military families get the support they deserve, and protects the United States from emerging global threats. The bill reduces inefficiencies and invests those savings into higher national security priorities to keep our country safe and support our troops.

“This legislation strengthens policies to detain and prosecute terrorists and ensures that no terrorist detainee can be brought into the United States. As a former military prosecutor, I am certain that trying detainees in military tribunals at Guantanamo Bay is the best way to hold terrorists accountable, keep them out of our country, and prevent them from rejoining the fight.

“While I am concerned that some language in the bill keeps the extra engine on life support, I am pleased that it does not include any funding for the development of that unnecessary program. The House, Senate, White House and Pentagon have all spoken on this issue and made clear that there is no funding for the wasteful extra engine. This fight has always been about spending and cost. Should subsequent budgets seek actual funds for a second engine, we will fight those battles as they come. In the meantime, the Congress has spoken, and the taxpayers are the real winners.”

The defense bill includes three Rooney amendments that will:

- Increase research to assist servicemen and women struggling with substance abuse;
 - Explore the use of virtual reality technology to treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD);
- and,
- Fund air-to-ground simulations for Air Force training.

“While we’ve made tremendous progress in improving mental health services for our troops and veterans, the high rates of suicide and invisible wounds like PTSD are clear evidence that we must do more to help those who serve our country,” Rooney said. “By expanding research and

exploring cutting edge treatments and technologies, we can help ensure that our troops and veterans get the care they need.”

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